

Te Pae Tawhiti

Strategic direction

Our strategic direction guides council's decision-making



The Kaokao pattern means protection. It represents the rib cage and arms of warriors.

Northland is a place of strong cultural identity, deep community connection and entrepreneurial momentum. Our rich natural environment sustains our people and supports our long-term prosperity.

Northland Regional Council is focussed on planning for a future where our whole environment is healthy, our communities are thriving and opportunities remain for future generations.

However, we face challenges: slowing population growth, cost of living pressures and persistent economic disparities, alongside continued environmental pressures and vulnerability to climate change impacts. These challenges are interconnected and require long term, coordinated responses.

At the same time, the regional council is facing an unprecedented level of reform. Council recognises the need for change and embraces the opportunity to deliver better outcomes for Northland. While change is a given, the future shape of local government is uncertain. Council is deeply

committed to providing clarity, focus and stability, through current reform processes, ensuring the organisation remains adaptable, high performing and focused on what matters most for Northland.

This strategic direction sets out our focus for the next three years (2026 - 2029). It will guide decision-making – what we prioritise, how we invest and how we work with others – and inform the development of our Long Term Plan 2027-2037 for consultation. A clear strategy sets us up for success through effective service delivery, whatever the future shape and form of local government, and continued engagement and collaboration with our communities, iwi and hapū partners, central government, and key sectors.



OUR VALUES UNDERPIN HOW WE WORK

He toka tu moana - We stand guard for tomorrow
We apply an intergenerational lens and act as kaitiaki – we protect ecosystems, support self-determination, and build a prosperous and environmentally sustainable future for present and future generations.

Whaia te iti kahurangi - We aim high
We strive for excellence and effectiveness in everything we do. We challenge ourselves to learn, improve, and deliver high quality work, using evidence, innovation, and disciplined ways of working.

Kokiri ngātahi - We lead together
We work together through trust, openness and shared leadership, building strong authentic partnerships across our organisation and with the communities we serve.

He toa kei te kokiri
We act with courage and care
We treat each other with empathy, respect and integrity. We speak up and take bold action to lead positive change for our region.



OUR MISSION

To serve Northland through
bold and purposeful action

Mo te Taitokerau, me
māia, me kōkiri mārika



TE PAE TAWHITI OUR VISION

Northland, the top region,
where people and nature
flourish together.

Taitokerau ki runga, ko
konei ka puāwai tahi ai te
tangata me te taiao.

A confident, effective council, delivering on its priorities

We work to deliver real outcomes for Taitokerau. This means making well-informed decisions about what we invest in and where, and who pays – grounded in sound evidence and ongoing conversations with our communities. To support this, we are driving six strategic shifts across the organisation.



We are focussed on delivering long-term outcomes for the region

Healthy land, waters and coast



Outcomes

Fresh and coastal waters are clean and full of life, and our air is clear, supporting a healthy environment and the needs of our people. Our land use and economy grow within environmental limits and are sustainable over generations.

We will do this by

- Leading place-based implementation of the new resource management system, alongside other Northland councils, communities and mana whenua, to enable development within environmental limits.
- Delivering catchment functions in an integrated way, often alongside landowners, and targeting effort where it will have the greatest impact.
- Maintaining confidence in the consenting system with clear and transparent compliance approaches.
- Delivering maritime services that enable environmental remediation following oil spills and support navigational safety.

Protected and flourishing native life



Outcomes

Native taonga in Taitokerau are valued and proactively managed across land, freshwater and marine environments, enabling the long-term recovery of threatened species and ecosystems.

We will do this by

- Operating as a regional centre of excellence that empowers and supports local communities to deliver on-the-ground biosecurity and biodiversity initiatives.
- Partnering with central government, the regional sector and primary industries to clarify responsibilities, support equitable cost-sharing and deliver effective biosecurity outcomes.

Resilient and connected communities



Outcomes

Households, whānau and communities understand natural hazards and climate risks, and are empowered to prepare for, respond to, and recover quickly from future disruptions. Essential infrastructure and services are safe-guarded, and transport networks enable communities to stay connected.

We will do this by

- Strengthening a whole-of-society approach to emergency management, focussed on risk reduction and recovery, as well as response.
- Prioritising and advocating for strategic investment in flood risk mitigation to improve community resilience and protect critical infrastructure.
- Targeting community funding for climate resilience to activities that address critical risks and deliver lasting resilience gains.
- Supporting evidence-based spatial planning and decision-making about where development happens.
- Enhancing community connectivity through delivery of public transport services.

We are focussed on delivering long-term outcomes for the region

Meaningful partnerships with tāngata whenua



Outcomes

Mātauranga and culture of te ao Māori enrich our region, and meaningful partnerships reflect our commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Māori communities are empowered and prosperous, achieving strong outcomes for people and a thriving Taitokerau.

We will do this by

- Growing consistency, capability and resourcing for relationship-based delivery, underpinned by integrity and trust, in line with our Te Tiriti strategy Tāiki ē.
- Strengthening Te Ruarangi, as a valued governance partnership between council and tāngata whenua of Taitokerau.

A thriving and innovative economy



Outcomes

A vibrant economy supports wellbeing and a healthy standard of living, generating sustainable value for current and future generations. Enabling infrastructure – including road, rail, reliable water supplies and renewable energy – supports economic resilience and growth.

We will do this by

- Continuing to strategically invest in regional projects via Northland NZ, the region's economic development agency.
- Driving implementation of Te Rerenga Economic Wellbeing Strategy.
- Strategic advocacy for and facilitation of critical enablers of economic growth and development.

Regional leadership – future-focused, delivering excellence and affordability



Outcomes

Northland Regional Council is fit for the future – whatever form it takes – and provides strategic regional leadership. Environmental and financial stewardship are delivered together, sustaining communities and natural resources through affordable, value-for-money services. Together we grow understanding and management of the environment as an inter-generational asset.

We will do this by

- Providing a strong regional perspective and leadership in a 'By Northland For Northland' approach to local government reform.
- Making transparent decisions about affordability, funding and rates, balancing long-term investment with fairness for current and future ratepayers.
- Maintaining a strong service culture with high-quality customer and community engagement and clear communications that build understanding and trust.

Implementation and accountability

This strategy will guide elected member decision-making and development of our Long Term Plan 2027-2037 (LTP) for consultation. The Levels of Service and Key Performance Indicators set in the LTP and linked to outcomes, once adopted, will be a key mechanism for reporting on progress. This direction will also inform planning at the organisational, group, team and individual level.

Te Pae Tawhiti



Our strategic direction integrates key elements of where we are going and how we are going to get there.

Long Term Plan



Our Long Term Plan sets out what we will do and how we will fund it over the next ten years. It also provides a high-level view of the key activities we plan to deliver.

Work planning



Groups plan their programmes and projects in WayPoint, and track progress against agreed performance measures. Groups also contribute to shared programmes of work that deliver on organisation wide initiatives, such as Tāiki ē and Ngā Taumata o te Moana.

Individual objectives



Every year we all set individual performance and development objectives. These personal plans link how we individually contribute towards our organisational projects/ programmes, outcomes and ultimately our organisational vision.